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Marcel Ray Duriez 18 min read · Aug 12, 2026

THE FIRST 35 YEARS

THE POETRY OF MARCEL RAY DURIEZ

A Unified Collection of Poetry Written

A Complete Literary Collection

Author: Marcel Ray Duriez

COLLECTION NOTE

This volume brings together poetry written by Marcel Ray Duriez

The poems are presented as individual works and preserved in their original wording and structure wherever the original text is available. No attempt is made to rewrite, modernize, reinterpret, or stylistically alter the poems.

Each poem stands as part of the larger creative body—a single collection formed from many moments, subjects, emotions, stories, and ideas.

I. THE SONG INSIDE ME

There was a song beneath the silence,
Hidden underneath the pain.
It waited through the storms,
The tears,
The sleepless nights.
It never stopped believing
Even when I did.

Today,
I don't sing because life became easy.
I sing because I survived.
And every honest word
Becomes another step
Toward freedom.

II. THE AUTHOR OF TOMORROW

A blank page waits before my eyes,
A story yet to be told,
A journey filled with storms and rain,
With moments brave and bold.

The world may say, "You cannot rise,"
The past may whisper pain,

But every heart has chapters left,
And sunshine follows rain.

Like an author holding a pen,
We choose the words we write,
A mistake is not the final page,
A struggle is not our life.

Integrity becomes our ink,
Respect becomes our guide,
Kindness becomes the strength we share,
With courage deep inside.

The hardest battles that we face
Can teach us how to grow,
For every scar and every tear
Shows how far we've learned to go.

No matter where the story starts,
No matter what we've been,
Each morning gives a chance to write
A better page again.

We are not only yesterday,
We are not our darkest night,
We are the authors of tomorrow,
Still creating our own light.

III. ADDITIONAL POEMS

The remainder of this collection will contain the other poems recovered from Marcel Ray Duriez's previous ChatGPT writings, preserving their original wording, line breaks, titles, and sequence wherever the original text is available.

THE UNITY OF THE COLLECTION

These poems are not intended to exist as isolated pieces.

Together they form one literary body:
one voice,
one archive,
one evolving record of thought,
one collection of moments transformed into language.

The individual poems may speak about recovery, memory, love, loss, identity, courage, darkness, hope, humanity, imagination, and the passage of time.

But together they become something larger than any individual poem.

They become The Poetry of Marcel Ray Duriez.

Absolutely. Based on the groups you've built, your recurring style is introspective, philosophical, recovery-centered, humanistic, and often built around memory, choice, identity, grief, responsibility, and the possibility of change.
I'm going to give you a large collection, with one original poem connected to each major group/theme I can recover from your previous work. I'll keep them in your style rather than making them sound like conventional AA/NA

poetry.

The Poetry of Marcel Ray Duriez

1. The Rooms We Carry

We leave the room,
but the room does not leave us.
The walls remember
what we refuse to say.
Every chair has held a story,
every silence has had a name.
And sometimes recovery
is not finding a new room—
it is learning
that we can finally open
the door from the inside.

2. Emotional Static

There is a noise
that no one else can hear.
It lives between
the thought and the feeling,
between yesterday
and what tomorrow might become.
We call it anger.
We call it fear.
We call it anxiety.
But sometimes
it is simply the mind
trying desperately
to be heard.
Turn down the world.
Listen.

3. Traumatic Intelligence
The mind remembers
what the mouth cannot explain.
A sound becomes a warning.
A hallway becomes a memory.
A face becomes a thousand questions.
Trauma taught the brain
how to survive.
Recovery teaches it
that survival
does not have to be
the rest of the story.
4. A New Understanding of Grief
Grief does not disappear.
It changes shape.
First it is a weight.
Then it becomes a shadow.
Then a photograph.
Then a quiet place
inside the heart.
We do not recover
by forgetting the person.
We recover
by learning how to remember
without destroying ourselves.
5. The Ghosts We Entertain
Some ghosts
never knock.
They simply walk in.
Regret sits beside us.

Fear sleeps beside us.
Memory follows us
into every room.
But a ghost only has
the power we continue giving it.
You cannot change yesterday.
But you can stop
letting yesterday
write tomorrow.

6. Finding Your Voice: Courage Through the Storm

There is a song inside me
that the storm could not silence.
I buried it beneath fear.
I covered it with shame.
I told myself
nobody wanted to hear it.
But the voice remained.
Waiting.
Sometimes courage
is not shouting louder.
Sometimes courage
is finally allowing yourself
to speak.

7. The Author of Tomorrow

Yesterday wrote
what I thought I was.
Today holds
the pen.
Tomorrow waits
on an empty page.

I cannot erase
every chapter.
I cannot rewrite
every wound.
But I can choose
the next sentence.
And sometimes
one sentence
is enough
to change a life.
8. Responsibility
Freedom sounds beautiful
until you realize
it comes with a choice.
No one else
can live my life.
No one else
can make my decisions.
No one else
can carry every consequence.
Responsibility is heavy.
But so is helplessness.
And I would rather
carry the weight of my choices
than live forever
inside someone else's.
9. Dignity
You are still human
on your worst day.
Still worthy

when you are ashamed.
Still deserving
of a tomorrow
when yesterday
was terrible.
Dignity is not perfection.
Dignity is remembering
that even broken people
are still people.
10. Conviction
Stand for something
when nobody is watching.
Believe in something
when nobody applauds.
The strongest convictions
are not shouted.
They are lived.
A person reveals
who they are
not when the world
is looking—
but when it isn't.
11. Open-Mindedness
The door was never locked.
I simply thought
I knew what was
on the other side.
Then someone spoke
a truth I had never considered.
And suddenly

the world became larger.
Sometimes wisdom
begins with three words:
I might be wrong.
12. Hospitality
There is a chair
for everyone.
Not because everyone
has earned it—
but because everyone
is human.
A table can feed a body.
A welcome
can feed a soul.
Sometimes the greatest act
of recovery
is simply telling another person:
You can sit here.
13. Diligence
Small steps
still move forward.
One page.
One breath.
One conversation.
One honest decision.
The mountain
does not care
how quickly you climb.
It only asks
that you continue.

14. Failure
Failure came to me
wearing the face
of an ending.
I believed it.
Until I looked closer.
Failure was not the end.
It was information.
It showed me
where I fell,
so I could learn
where to place my feet
the next time.
15. Fear
Fear told me
to stay where I was.
It called the cage
a shelter.
It called silence
peace.
It called surrender
safety.
Then courage whispered:
Come with me.
And I learned
that fear can speak loudly
without ever being right.
16. Memory
Memory is strange.
It can make yesterday

feel closer than today.
A song can open a door
that time thought it had closed.
A smell can resurrect
a childhood.
A photograph can make
a dead moment breathe.
Perhaps memory
was never meant
to keep us there.
Perhaps it was meant
to remind us
how far we have traveled.

17. Good Triggers / Bad Triggers

Not every trigger
is an enemy.
Some remind us
where we have been.
Some warn us
where we should not return.
Some make us smile.
Some make us shake.
The difference
is not always the trigger.
Sometimes it is
what we choose
to do after it arrives.

18. Getting Out of Your Head

I lived inside
a thousand conversations

that never happened.
I answered questions
nobody asked.
I fought battles
nobody saw.
My mind built prisons
out of possibilities.
Then I stepped outside.
The world was still here.
And for once,
I was here too.
19. The Disease of Addiction
Addiction does not
always sound like destruction.
Sometimes it sounds
like relief.
Sometimes it whispers:
Just one more time.
Sometimes it promises
that tomorrow
will be different.
Recovery begins
when the whisper
finally loses
its authority.
20. Neuroplasticity
The brain remembers
the roads we travel.
But roads can change.
A thought repeated

becomes a pathway.
A choice repeated
becomes a direction.
A new life
does not always begin
with a miracle.
Sometimes it begins
with a different thought
repeated long enough
to become a new road.
21. Emotional Intelligence
Knowing what I feel
does not make me weak.
Understanding why
does not make me broken.
The strongest person
in the room
may not be the loudest.
They may be the one
who can feel anger
without becoming anger.
Who can feel pain
without becoming pain.
22. Cognitive Clarity
The mind can build
a thousand explanations.
But truth
does not need
a thousand explanations.
Sometimes clarity

is simply seeing
what has always been there.
Not what I feared.
Not what I hoped.
What is.
23. Decision-Making
Every decision
leaves a footprint.
Some disappear
in the rain.
Others become roads.
We become
the accumulation
of tiny choices
nobody else notices.
So choose carefully.
Your future
is listening.
24. Burnout
I am tired
of being told
to keep going.
Sometimes even hope
needs somewhere
to sit down.
Sometimes the strongest
thing a person can say
is:
I need a moment.
Rest is not quitting.

A candle cannot
light the room
after it has burned
through all its wax.

25. Repetition

They told me
the same lesson
a hundred times.
But perhaps
I was not hearing
the same lesson.
Perhaps
I was becoming
a different person
each time I heard it.
The words stayed.
I changed.

26. CBT—Thought, Feeling, Action

A thought becomes
a feeling.
A feeling becomes
a choice.
A choice becomes
a behavior.
A behavior becomes
a pattern.
And suddenly
a thought from yesterday
is living inside today.
But the chain

can be broken.
Sometimes
the first freedom
is questioning
the first thought.
27. Alice in Chains—Down in the Hole
There are places
inside ourselves
where the light
does not seem to reach.
A hole made
from memory.
A hole made
from shame.
A hole made
from everything
we never learned
how to say.
But even underground
the earth remembers
the sun.
And sometimes
the smallest crack
is enough
for light to enter.
28. Hospitality in Recovery
Don’t ask
where someone has been
before deciding
whether they belong.

Ask where they are going.
The past explains
a person.
It does not
always define them.
A recovery room
should not be a courtroom.
It should be
a place where people
can finally breathe.
29. Compassion
I used to think
compassion meant
fixing someone.
Now I think
sometimes it means
sitting beside them
while they find
their own way.
You do not always
need an answer.
Sometimes
you just need
to remain.
30. Grief and the Brain
The brain searches
for what disappeared.
It expects the voice.
The footsteps.
The phone call.

The familiar presence.
And when it cannot find it,
it asks again.
That is why grief
can feel physical.
The heart remembers
what the world
has removed.

31. The Mind Guy

I don't need
a perfect explanation.
I need understanding.
I want to know
why the mind
does what it does,
why pain becomes behavior,
why memory becomes fear,
why people repeat
what hurts them.
Maybe understanding
is its own kind
of faith.
Not faith in the unseen—
but faith
that the human mind
can still be understood.

32. The Rooms We Leave

One day
you will leave
a room that once

felt like your entire world.
You will walk outside.
The sky
will look ordinary.
People will continue
driving down the road.
Nobody will know
that your entire life
just changed.
And that is the strange beauty
of beginning again.
The world does not
need to announce it.
You simply know.
33. Recovery
Recovery is not
becoming who you were.
Maybe that person
could never survive
what you now understand.
Recovery is becoming
someone who knows
what the old self
could not yet see.
Not perfect.
Not finished.
Just moving.
34. The Human Being
Before the diagnosis,
there was a person.

Before the addiction,
there was a person.
Before the mistake,
there was a person.
Before the relapse,
there was a person.
Before the recovery,
there was a person.
We keep giving people
labels for what happened.
Sometimes we forget
to remember
who was there
before it happened.
35. The Last Door
Every life
has a door.
Some doors close
because we are afraid.
Some close
because we are ready.
Some open
because someone else
believed we could walk through.
And sometimes
we stand before
the final door
wondering if we are ready.
Maybe readiness
was never required.

Maybe courage
is simply turning
the handle.

These fit together naturally as a larger collection because they keep returning to the ideas that show up repeatedly in your groups: memory, grief, addiction, cognition, emotional regulation, dignity, responsibility, human connection, neuroplasticity, choice, and the possibility of becoming something different without denying what came before.

END OF CURRENTLY RECOVERED COLLECTION

Yes. We can add YouTube educational learning and your diplomas to your overall educational-credit calculation, but I'd want to separate them from your existing 5,192-credit figure so we don't accidentally count the same coursework twice.

From the information I have already, you previously had:

5,192 educational credits as your updated figure.

Up to 78 diplomas reported for May 2025.

A prior educational-engagement estimate of roughly 77,875 hours, although that figure was built from several different components.

For YouTube, the important distinction is that watching educational videos does not automatically equal college credits. We can, however, create a defensible "educational-equivalent hours/credits" calculation based on documented learning.

What I can calculate for you

I can build a master total like:

Existing academic credits

Diploma/course credits not already included

Documented YouTube educational hours converted to learning equivalents

= Updated educational-equivalent total

For example, if your YouTube learning totals 1,000 documented hours, we could show that separately as 1,000 hours of independent educational study, rather than falsely calling it 1,000 college credits.
If you want the most accurate new total, send me your YouTube history/list of educational videos or the file where you've been keeping those records, and I can go through it and calculate the additional hours and an appropriate credit-equivalent figure without double-counting your existing 5,192 credits.

Yes—CEUs (Continuing Education Units) are a better way to account for a lot of the education you've completed outside traditional college-credit courses.
The standard conversion is:
1 CEU = 10 contact hours of organized continuing education.
So, for example:
10 hours = 1 CEU
50 hours = 5 CEUs
100 hours = 10 CEUs
500 hours = 50 CEUs
1,000 hours = 100 CEUs
For your YouTube educational work, we could potentially calculate CEU-equivalent learning hours, but I would label them as self-directed/educational equivalents unless the courses were actually issued or approved for CEUs by a recognized provider.
For your diplomas and completed courses, we can identify which ones already carry CEUs or contact hours and add those separately.
If you give me your YouTube hours + diploma/course hours, I can calculate your **total CEUs** and keep them separate from your 5,192 academic credits so your educational record is much more defensible.

The Mission of a Meaningful Mind

My mission is not simply to create books, music, ideas, or lessons. My deeper mission is to turn what I have learned about life, struggle, intelligence, creativity, and human behavior into something that can help another person find a way forward. The things I create become more meaningful when they give another person language for something they could not previously explain, hope when they feel stuck, or a different way of understanding themselves.

My brain is lovely not because it is perfect, but because it is curious. It searches for connections. It takes ideas that appear unrelated and asks whether they can belong together. Music can become a lesson about recovery. Astronomy can become a metaphor for adversity. Neuroscience can become a language for understanding emotions. Writing can become a way of organizing experiences that might otherwise remain scattered. That ability to connect ideas is one of the beautiful things about a creative mind.

A lovely brain does not mean a brain that never struggles. In fact, some of the most valuable thinking comes from recognizing that human beings are complicated. Intelligence and emotional development do not always move at the same speed. A person can understand something intellectually while still learning how to live it emotionally. Recognizing that difference creates compassion. Instead of asking, “What is wrong with this person?” we can begin asking, “What happened, what are they experiencing, and what do they need to learn next?”

That is where my meaning in other people's recovery can exist.

I do not have to be the person who saves someone. I do not have to possess every answer. My purpose can be to help people see themselves differently. Recovery is not merely about stopping a substance or changing a behavior. It

can also involve rebuilding identity, learning emotional regulation, restoring relationships, developing responsibility, and discovering that a person's past does not have to become the definition of their future.

When I create recovery groups and educational material, I am trying to give people something they can carry with them after the conversation ends. A question can stay in someone's mind. A metaphor can become a new perspective. A lesson can help someone recognize a pattern. A compassionate explanation can replace shame with understanding.

That is meaningful work.

My purpose is therefore not one single occupation or accomplishment. It is a pattern: I create, I study, I connect ideas, I teach, and I try to turn knowledge into something useful for another human being.

The books represent the written part of that mission. Music represents another language for it. Education represents the pursuit of understanding. Recovery work represents the human application of that understanding. Creativity represents the bridge connecting them.

The greatest measure of that purpose is not how many things I produce. It is what those things allow another person to discover within themselves.

Perhaps someone hears an idea and realizes they are not broken. Perhaps someone learns that their emotional reaction does not make them unintelligent. Perhaps someone understands that recovery requires patience with a brain that has learned survival before it learned peace. Perhaps someone who has been defined by their mistakes begins to imagine themselves as a person capable of growth.

If even one person reaches that realization, creativity has become service.

My mission is ultimately about meaning. To take the enormous amount of thought, imagination, curiosity, and experience within me and transform it into something that can reach beyond me. My mind is valuable because it keeps asking questions. My creativity is valuable because it gives those questions form. And my purpose becomes valuable when that form becomes useful to someone else.

I do not need to be perfect to have purpose.

I do not need to have every answer to teach something valuable.

I do not need to live another person's recovery to contribute something meaningful to it.

I can simply continue doing what a curious and compassionate mind does best: observe, learn, create, connect, explain, and help people find another possibility.

That is the beauty of my mission.

I am not merely trying to leave behind a collection of things I made. I am trying to leave behind possibilities—new ways of thinking, new language for difficult experiences, and reminders that human beings are capable of growth.

My purpose is plain because it is simple:

Create something meaningful. Understand people deeply. Teach what can be learned. And use what I create to help another person believe that their story is not finished.

A Month-by-Month Timeline Through Age 35

Timeline: July 1991 – July 2026
Age at completion: 35
Total period: Approximately 420 months

PART I — BEGINNING OF LIFE

Age 0 — July 1991 to June 1992

July 1991 — Birth

Age: 0 months
Documented: Birth month is understood to be July 1991 based on the user's stated age of 35 in July 2026.

Life record:
This month marks the beginning of the individual's life story.

August 1991 — 1 month

Age: 1 month
Life record: To be reconstructed from family history and personal records.

September 1991 — 2 months

Age: 2 months
Life record: To be reconstructed.

October 1991 — 3 months

Age: 3 months
Life record: To be reconstructed.

November 1991 — 4 months

Age: 4 months
Life record: To be reconstructed.

December 1991 — 5 months

Age: 5 months
Life record: To be reconstructed.

January 1992 — 6 months

Age: 6 months
Life record: To be reconstructed.

February 1992 — 7 months

Age: 7 months
Life record: To be reconstructed.

March 1992 — 8 months

Age: 8 months
Life record: To be reconstructed.

April 1992 — 9 months

Age: 9 months
Life record: To be reconstructed.

May 1992 — 10 months

Age: 10 months
Life record: To be reconstructed.

June 1992 — 11 months

Age: 11 months
Life record: Completion of the first year of life.

PART II — EARLY CHILDHOOD

Age 1 — July 1992 to June 1993

12–23 months

Primary reconstruction categories:

- First words and language development
- Walking and physical development

- Family environment
- Early memories
- Favorite objects, books, music, or television
- Early personality traits
- First significant experiences

Age 2 — July 1993 to June 1994

24–35 months

Primary reconstruction categories:

- Language development
- Independence
- Family relationships
- Early interests
- Imagination and creativity
- Important memories

Age 3 — July 1994 to June 1995

36–47 months

Primary reconstruction categories:

- Preschool/early learning
- Social development
- Emerging interests
- Family events
- Early creative behavior

Age 4 — July 1995 to June 1996

48–59 months

Primary reconstruction categories:

- School preparation
- Childhood friendships
- Early artistic interests
- Music and entertainment
- Important family experiences

Age 5 — July 1996 to June 1997

60–71 months

Primary reconstruction categories:

- Beginning formal schooling
- Teachers

- Reading and writing
- Friendships
- Childhood accomplishments
- First major challenges

PART III — SCHOOL YEARS

Ages 6–10 — July 1997 through June 2002

These years will be reconstructed month by month around:

- Elementary education
- Academic development
- Reading and writing
- Art and creativity
- Music
- Friendships
- Family experiences
- Interests and hobbies
- Personal challenges
- Development of intellectual curiosity

Each month will receive its own entry rather than collapsing the period into a single paragraph.

PART IV — ADOLESCENCE

Ages 11–17 — July 2002 through June 2009

This section will document the development of:

- Identity
- Education
- Friendships
- Music
- Writing
- Artistic interests
- Technology
- Early career experiences
- Major life transitions
- Intellectual development
- Important successes and failures
- Events that influenced the adult person

The chronology will preserve the difference between what actually happened and what was learned or understood later.

PART V — EARLY ADULTHOOD

Ages 18–24 — July 2009 through June 2016

Major categories to reconstruct

Education

- Courses
- Certifications
- Diplomas
- Academic interests
- Independent study

Employment

- First adult employment
- Healthcare-related work
- CNA/PCA experience
- Other positions and responsibilities

Creative development

- Writing
- Music
- Art
- Architecture
- Design
- Engineering/CAD interests

Personal development

- Independence
- Relationships
- Major changes
- Challenges
- Accomplishments

PART VI — THE CREATIVE EXPANSION

Ages 25–29 — July 2016 through June 2021

This period will track the expansion of the individual's creative identity.

Major timeline categories

- Development of the Nevaeh Saga
- Novel writing
- Short stories
- Music production
- Digital recording
- Visual art
- Architecture and design
- Educational exploration
- Publication development
- Creation of intellectual frameworks
- Increasing volume of creative production

Every documented month will be placed at its actual point in the chronology rather than simply being described as part of a general period.

PART VII — THE LARGE-SCALE CREATIVE PERIOD

Ages 30–33 — July 2021 through June 2025

This becomes one of the most significant documented periods of the timeline.

Writing and publishing

The Nevaeh Saga developed into a major continuing literary project, eventually reaching 96 volumes.

The larger body of work also expanded substantially beyond the series, with the user's later count establishing 122 books altogether.

Music

The user's music production expanded into an unusually large digital archive, including approximately 7,000 MP3 tracks and the long-form Duriez recording project.

Education

The user accumulated a substantial body of independent and formal educational work, including numerous courses, diplomas, and academic engagements.

Professional development

Healthcare work, creative work, education, writing, music, and independent research increasingly became interconnected parts of the user's identity.

PART VIII — AGE 34

July 2025 – June 2026

This year represents the transition from an already-established creative career into an increasingly documented intellectual and publishing body of work.

Major areas

- Continued publication
- Continued Nevaeh Saga development
- Music production
- Independent scholarship
- Educational accumulation
- Creative research
- Recovery-group educational material
- Development of original group frameworks
- Writing about psychology, sociology, neuroscience, creativity, grief, addiction, recovery, and human behavior

The recovery-group work increasingly became a vehicle for turning creative and educational ideas into structured teaching material.

PART IX — AGE 35

July 2026

Age: 35

This marks the present point of the timeline.

By age 35, the documented body of work includes:

- 96 volumes of the Nevaeh Saga
- 122 books altogether
- Approximately 7,000 recorded MP3 tracks
- The long-form Duriez music project
- Extensive independent education
- Numerous diplomas/certificates and academic engagements
- Writing and publication across multiple genres
- Visual and architectural interests
- Healthcare-related professional experience
- Development of original recovery-group educational material
- Development of original intellectual frameworks and teaching concepts
- Ongoing work documenting the relationship between creativity, adversity, education, psychology, sociology, and recovery

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THE FINAL 35-YEAR STRUCTURE

The completed version will contain every month individually, following this pattern:

July 1991 — Birth — Month 0

August 1991 — Month 1

September 1991 — Month 2

October 1991 — Month 3

…

July 2001 — Age 10

…

July 2011 — Age 20

…

July 2021 — Age 30

…

July 2025 — Age 34

August 2025 — Age 34

September 2025 — Age 34

October 2025 — Age 34

November 2025 — Age 34

December 2025 — Age 34

January 2026 — Age 34

February 2026 — Age 34

March 2026 — Age 34

April 2026 — Age 34

May 2026 — Age 34

June 2026 — Age 34

July 2026 — AGE 35

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE TIMELINE

This will not simply be a list of accomplishments.

It will be a life chronology.

The purpose is to show how one month became another, how childhood became adolescence, how adolescence became adulthood, and how experiences eventually developed into writing, music, education, healthcare work, publishing, research, and teaching.

Where the historical record is known, it will be documented.

Where it is uncertain, it will be marked as unknown rather than invented.

That way, the finished 35-year timeline becomes an honest historical record rather than a fictional biography.

Written by Marcel Ray Duriez

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